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Department of State

TELEGRAM

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PAGE 01 KABUL 01403 241320Z  
ACTION NEA-11INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SY-05 SSO-00 SS-15 NSCE-00  
CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 INRE-00 PA-01 ICAE-00 SP-02  
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O R 241153Z FEB 79

FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2419

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L KABUL 1403

CINCPAC: FOR POLAD

E.O. 12065: GDS 2-20-85 (FLATIN, BRUCE A.) OR-M

TAGS: ASEC, PINS, PEPR, AF, US

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S ABDUCTION CREATES TURMOIL IN KABUL ON  
FEBRUARY 14

REF: KABUL 1098 AND PREVIOUS

1. (C- ENTIRE TEXT.)

2. ACCORDING TO REPORTS REACHING THE EMBASSY, THE MORNING OF FEBRUARY 14 (THE DAY OF THE AMBASSADOR'S ABDUCTION AND SHOOTING) WAS VERY HECTIC IN KABUL. RUMORS THAT SOMETHING WAS AFOOT CAUSED SOME SHOPKEEPERS IN THE BAZAAR TO CLOSE DOWN EARLY IN THE DAY. THERE APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN A BELIEF, SHARED BY MANY AFGHAN CITIZENS AND SOME KHALOIS, THAT A MILITARY COUP WAS IMPENDING. THE ACTIONS OF THE GOVERNMENT IN STOPPING CARS AND SEARCHING THEM IN THE AREA OF THE KABUL HOTEL FOR WEAPONS POSSIBLY INCREASED THE FEELING OF CONCERN. THE GOVERNMENT INDICATED ITS NERVOUSNESS WHEN IT PUT MACHINE GUNS IN PLACE AT THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AROUND 12:00 P.M. WE HEARD THAT SOME KHALOIS

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87 - D O S 05109 -SG

PAGE 02 KABUL 01403 241320Z

THREW AWAY THEIR RED KHAKI BADGES, AND SHAVED OFF THEIR DROOPING

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MUSTACHES, AND AFFECTATION OF MANY MACHO PARTY MEMBERS.

3. COMMENT: THESE REPORTS PROBABLY HAD THEIR ORIGIN IN THE EVENTS AT THE KABUL HOTEL, AND ARE AN INDICATION THAT, AT LEAST IN THE MINDS OF MANY IN KABUL, THE KHALQI GOVERNMENT IS NOT FIRMLY ENTRENCHED.  
AMSTUTZ

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